0271 FATHERS' CHILD INJURY PREVENTION ATTITUDES AND PRACTICES

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Introduction Fathers have a major impact on various aspects of child health and development yet little is known about their roles in preventing injuries the most significant risk to their childrens health. While parents play a large role in mitigating childhood injury risks, particularly for younger children, the role of each parent differs substantially and requires investigation.

Purpose Using a qualitative approach to develop to enhance our understanding of fathers safety-related attitudes and practices.

Method Interviews were conducted with fathers of children aged 2–7 years in British Columbia, Canada. Questions addressed fathers roles and typical activities with their children, concerns regarding child safety, safety practices, and access of safety-related resources. Grounded theory methods guided data analysis.

Results A diverse sample of 32 fathers was interviewed. Central themes expressed by fathers included: exposure to risk plays an important role in childrens lives; accidents are part of life; not all injuries can be prevented; preventing serious injuries is important; injuries can represent learning experiences. Fathers focused on outdoor risk, rather than home-based risks and used supervision as an important strategy for injury prevention.

Conclusion Fathers attitudes and practices are important to consider in designing prevention programs. Building on perceptions that promote injury prevention (eg, use of supervision), and considering perceptions that challenge the perceived need for prevention in programming (eg, acceptance of injuries and risk) can help ensure the relevance and success of messages.

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